

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DUBLIN 01842 271819Z

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SP-02 INR-07 RSC-01

/038 W

----- 000675

R 271645Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6300

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L DUBLIN 1842

LIMDIS

"LONDON POUCH BELFAST

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, EI, UK (NI)

SUBJECT: KISSINGER/FITZGERALD MEETING: NI PROBLEM

REF: DUBLIN 1380

SUMMARY: WHILE NI VIOLENCE REMAINS SERIOUS, GOI POLICY IS POINTED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. WE BELIEVE THAT FITZGERALD'S DESCRIPTION OF PROBLEM WILL BE SOUND. WE SHOULD, HOWEVER, DISCOURAGE ANY HOPE THAT A UN PEACEKEEPING FORCE COULD BE A REASONABLE SUBSTITUTE FOR BRITISH ARMY. IF FITZGERALD PRESSES ON PROBLEM OF IRA FUND-RAISING IN US, IT WOULD BE LEGITIMATE TO ASK WHETHER HIS GOVERNMENT HAS DONE EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO COOPERATE. END SUMMARY.

1. FONMIN FITZGERALD HAS EARNED A REPUTATION AS AN OBJECTIVE AND SCHOLARLY ANALYST OF THE IRISH "TROUBLES." IF HE DESCRIBES CURRENT SITUATION TO SECRETARY, THE BRIEFING SHOULD BE ACCURATE, WITH SMALL POSSIBLE EXCEPTIONS NOTED BELOW.

2. DESPITE A CHRISTMAS TRUCE THE NI PROBLEM REMAINS BAD, AND OUR LAST ASSESSMENT (REFTEL) IS CURRENT. A LASTING POLITICAL SOLUTION WOULD HAVE TO INVOLVE GENUINE POWER-SHARING BETWEEN CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT COMMUNITIES, BUT THIS HAS BEEN TORPEDOED BY VIOLENCE
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PAGE 02 DUBLIN 01842 271819Z

FROM CATHOLIC EXTREMISTS (THE PROVISIONAL IRA) AND BY A MAJORITY

OF PROTESTANT POLITICIANS. MOST OBSERVERS EXPECT A DEADLOCK IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION TO BE ELECTED EARLY IN 1975. IN THE SHORT TERM, THUS, THE BEST THING THAT CAN BE SAID IS THAT THE BRITISH ARMY HAS KEPT THE VIOLENCE FROM BECOMING A FULL-SCALE CIVIL WAR. WE CANNOT ENVISAGE AT THIS TIME ANY OTHER PEACEKEEPING FORCE THAT WOULD BE NEARLY AS EFFECTIVE. FITZGERALD WILL UNDOUBTEDLY AGREE THAT IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO KEEP THE BRITISH ARMY ON THE SCENE. HE MAY CONCEIVABLY MENTION THE POSSIBILITY OF A UN PEACEKEEPING FORCE IF THE BRITISH WITHDRAW. AS SEEN FROM EMBASSY DUBLIN, THIS WOULD BE A VERY BAD ALTERNATIVE.

3. DR. FITZGERALD MAY MENTION THAT HIS GOVT IS TAKING STRONG MEASURES AGAINST THE PROVISIONAL IRA. THIS COULD ARISE IN A DISCUSSION OF IRA FUND-RAISING IN THE UNITED STATES, WHICH HE DEPLORES (AS DO WE). DEPT HAS MORE INFO THAN THIS EMBASSY ON FUND-RAISING PROBLEM, BUT WE MUST COMMENT THAT ANTI-IRA MEASURES IN DUBLIN HAVE NOT BEEN DRAMATICALLY EFFECTIVE. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT FITZGERALD AND HIS GOVT DO DETEST THE IRA, BUT THE AVERSION HAS NOT BEEN TRANSLATED INTO SUCCESSFUL ACTION. GOI DOES NOT SEEM WILLING TO RUN THE POLITICAL RISKS INVOLVED IN, FOR EXAMPLE, EXTRADITING IRA FUGITIVES OR COOPERATING WHOLEHEARTEDLY WITH THE BRITISH ARMY ON BORDER SECURITY. GOI HAS ALSO BEEN UNWILLING TO HONOR OUR REQUESTS FOR WHATEVER INFO IT MAY HAVE ON THE FUND-RAISING PROBLEM. DR. FITZGERALD IS VERY SENSITIVE ON THIS SUBJECT; HE MUST REALIZE THAT HIS GOVT'S PERFORMANCE IS OPEN TO CRITICISM. WE DO NOT RECOMMEND THAT AMERICANS CHIDE HIM ON THIS SUBJECT, BUT IF HE RAISES IT, HE COULD WELL BE ASKED WHETHER GOI IS DOING ALL IT CAN TO COOPERATE.

4. IN GENERAL, HOWEVER, GOI POLICY IS EMINENTLY PEACE-ORIENTED. IT IS, IN FACT, VERY CLOSE TO THAT OF BRITISH GOVT, WHICH IS ONE OF MOST HOPEFUL SIGNS IN A BAD SITUATION. MOORE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NORTHERN IRELAND, POLITICAL STABILITY, PARAMILITARY FORCES, POLITICAL SITUATION, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974DUBLIN01842
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740376-0033
From: DUBLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974129/aaaaagvs.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 74 DUBLIN 1380
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2002 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <26 FEB 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KISSINGER/FITZGERALD MEETING: NI PROBLEM
TAGS: PINT, EI, UK, US, (KISSINGER, HENRY A), (FITZERALD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005